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25/ drying—a process which is believed to destroy the vitamin content of vegetables.[1]

Gourds, fruit, &c. Gourds may be kept a few months, but not pumpkins. I once saw a small temporary granary of *mpundu* fruit, but I think this is very rare.

Roots, mushrooms, &c. Sweet potatoes, mushrooms, and caterpillars are preserved by a process of parboiling (*ukufubula*) and subsequent drying in the sun. These foods are used during the hunger months but are declared to be insipid.

Cassava is not stored, but eaten from the beds as wanted.

Meat and fish are not preserved in large quantities, because the supply is very scanty, but in each case the raw flesh is smoke-dried [438] over the open fire. There is some trade in dried fish preserved in this way.

Granaries and Storing Vessels

343 The approach to a Bemba village is usually up a narrow, over-
361 grown path, winding through untidy beds of pumpkins, beans, or
[487] maize. On the outskirts, the first buildings that catch the eye are the village granaries—lath and plaster cylinders with thatched roofs ranged in an irregular circle round the dwelling places.
343 These grain bins are of varying sizes, but measure usually about 10 feet high and 20 feet in circumference, and are raised on uprights about a foot from the ground. Each granary stands as near as possible to its owner's hut, the majority round the outside of the village, but a few scattered here and there inside. To European eyes, they are often untidy and inefficient looking constructions. The supports are sometimes unevenly placed, so that the whole structure seems to tilt to one side. The walls may be whitewashed [531] and painted with red, yellow, and black earth, but more often they are just roughly daubed with clay which cracks in the sun. The grass used for thatching is never cut evenly or bound round the edge, and therefore hangs in wisps of different lengths. But these granaries, though they do not conform to our artistic standards, are nevertheless the measure by which the prosperity of a village is very largely judged. Many huts with few grain bins mean few adult male householders in the community. Cracking walls, or

[1] Cf. the statement that the women of Nigeria dry their leaves in the shade in order to preserve their food value, quoted E. B. Worthington, 'Food and Nutrition of the African Native', *Africa*, vol. ix, 1936, p. 158.

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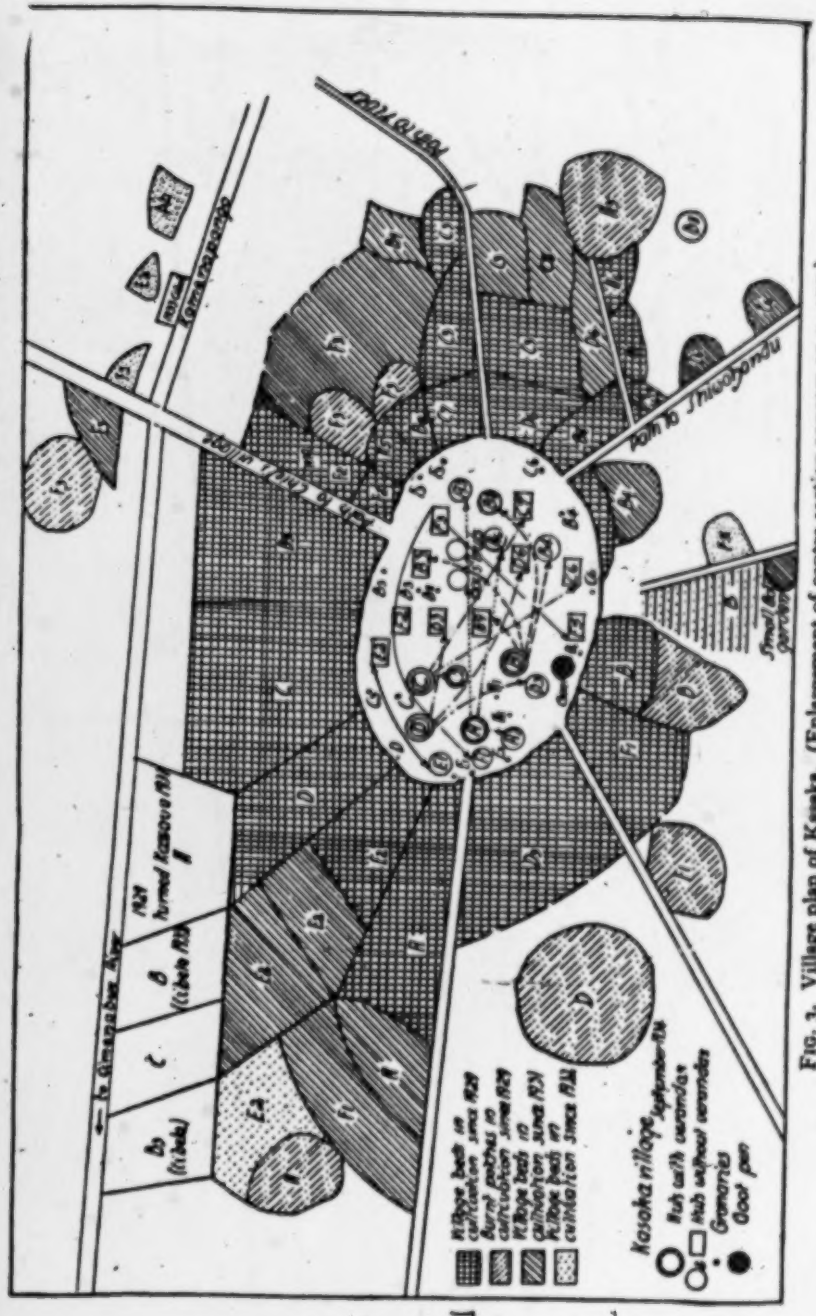

FIG. 3. Village plan of Kasaka. (Enlargement of centre section appears on p. 177.)

[p. 167]

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Kasakatula village before a drive. 'You child (i.e. member of our family) pierce the way through.'[1] At Kasaka village the headman who struck the nets for a blessing said, after calling the spirits by name, 'Light up the bush in front of us with a torch! Make it completely light. Let us kill meat.'[2] Such a series of quotations give some indication of the kind of attitude I have been trying to describe.

Locality and Residence.

Peoples who practise shifting cultivation are generally assumed to have no particular attachment to one stretch of land rather than another. We have already described the periodic movements of the Bemba village in relation to their agricultural system, and the individual's fairly frequent changes from community to community associated with his kinship principles and rules of residence at marriage. In such circumstances it would be surprising to find among these Central African people the same passionate devotion to a village site, or set of fields or gardens, which is reported from some of the over-populated Melanesian islands or those West African villages where fixed cultivation is practised. The permanent associations of the Bemba are a series of human relationships within his lineage group, and a reliance on certain tutelary deities associated with the soil, rather than attachments to a strip of land itself. It is not true, however, that the Bemba are without a sentimental fondness for different parts of their country. The majority of village communities tend only to move from site to site within quite a small radius—about five miles square—and are more closely connected with other communities in the same chief's territory than anywhere else. Also the people seem to cherish the warmest feelings for the deserted sites of the villages they have left (*icibolya*, plur. *ifibolya*) and even for those of other people. For the first few years after building a new settlement, villagers constantly go back to their derelict gardens to gather self-sown cucumbers and marrows, or to pick bananas on their old village sites. This connexion with the old site may last for some three or four years. But when the *icibolya* is overgrown with weeds, and small shrubs have sprung up on it, it is still spoken

[1] *Nomba tangileni pantanshi. We mucana, tungulule!*
[2] *Muno mpanga musanike umwenge! Mubute tutu! Tuipaye nama!*

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361 of with affection and a sort of pride. 'Come and see our *icibolya*', children used to say to me, sometimes taking me a three-mile walk to see a mere clearing in the bush where the undergrowth was still low, and only faint traces of garden mounds could still be seen. Here they would stand and gaze, sometimes in an almost reverent silence, sometimes trying to reconstruct the past life by suggesting what had happened here and there, and sometimes looking for overgrown fruit-trees. I noticed that carriers going through a new district would always stop at a deserted site, comment on its size, and speculate with eager curiosity as to whom it had belonged.

621 This attachment to deserted sites is due, I believe, to something more than mere human interest. For the stability of the village group it is important to preserve a sense of continuity between the community which built its huts on one spot and then moved to another. For one thing the name of the village is unchanged unless the whole group splits up, since it is customary to refer to such a settlement by the name of its headman, as for instance *Kwa Kapongolo*, 'at Kapongolo's', and in case of inheritance the heir assumes the dead man's title. Among the various rituals for founding a new village (*ukuzokolo mushi*), it is common to find that some symbolic object from the old village—a rafter from the roof of the headman's hut, or a stick from his ancestral shrine—must be carried to the new. The new village must also, in the native phrase, be made 'warm'. It must be turned from uninhabited bush into a human community. It would be dangerous to sleep in a new settlement unless the headman had preceded with his wife (*ukutangila*) and had performed an act of ritual intercourse and lit a new fire 'to warm the village' (*ukukafya mushi*). Later, divination is carried out by a ritual hunt (*ukuloa libanda*) to find out whether the *imipashi* are favourable. Bemba huts themselves may be built in a day or two, but the founding of a successful village community cannot be achieved by a single act. It requires the slow forging of human ties, and the gradual establishment of common interests and a sense of security among the inhabitants—a process which may take a year or more to complete. The chief Mwamba told me, in explanation of the fact that a year-old village had not yet performed the annual first-fruit rites, *Tabalaikala bwino*, 'They haven't properly settled down yet'; and it is the rule rather than the exception for chiefs to wait to carry out the elaborate ceremonies of

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•361 To conclude then, we are dealing with a tribe in which residence is never fixed in one exact locality, whether for the community or for the individual, but in which we find, almost paradoxically, a deep sentimental attachment to different parts of the country—either because they are being used, or have been used, as human habitations, because of their historical significance, or else their association with supernatural beliefs. We are describing a people living in a sparsely populated country, in which there would seem to be no sound economic reason why a community should settle in one spot rather than another. But the choice is not in fact unlimited. It depends on directly sociological factors such as membership of a kinship group and acceptance of a political allegiance, a belief as to the sphere of influence of certain supernatural beings, and lastly the factors, which we must now consider, the tribal rights as to the use of land.

Divisions of Land.

423 Europeans living in Northern Rhodesia often declare that the Bemba have no system of land tenure, and at first sight there is a good deal to be said for this point of view. A new-comer to the country notices at once the lack of boundaries between the garden beds round a village. As he travels through the bush he cannot avoid being struck by the apparently haphazard way in which natives sometimes start to make gardens, cut a few trees, and then abandon the site, and by the fact that they do not even mark out the limits of the space they mean to clear in any one year. The observer will also notice that in the course of ordinary conversation no Bemba lists among his assets his possession or occupation of a given tract of land. Few disputes as to the ownership of land or its rights of use appear before the courts, and the question does not usually figure in contested inheritances.

But because the land problem is not so acute in this area, as it is in many parts of present-day Africa, we cannot conclude that there are no tribal rights as to its use, and in fact from some points of view it is even more important to discover the exact relation of man to land among a population of shifting cultivators, than it is in a tribe where the rules of ownership are more formalized.

423 To begin with, how is the land initially subdivided?
6% *Icalo.* The biggest division recognized is the *i-calo* (plur.
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and in the case of a big village the circular strip of land surrounding the houses is only barely adequate to give each his due. The same desire to avoid quarrelling over land is still apparent, but fixed rules govern its selection. The site of a man's *mputa* is determined by the position of his hut. When a village is being built the old men have the first right to choose where they will build their huts. After that the young men group themselves—usually together at one end of the village. The strip of ground behind each hut on the outside ring is the property of the owner of the house. Those who have built in the centre of the village must cultivate beyond. The owners of the outside houses are allowed to cultivate as far as the nearest natural boundary, such as a river or path, if they desire to do so, otherwise they must announce where they intend to stop so that others can cultivate beyond them.

The village plan on p. 177 shows how owners A, A5, B, B4, B9, C, C7, D, D3, D6, F, F2 cultivate ground immediately behind their huts while the others have strips farther out into the bush.

At first sight it is difficult to understand how the conflicting aims and ambitions of each individual can be satisfied in practice. But it must be remembered that a Bemba, cultivating alone, cannot hope to dig up more than a certain amount of land, and he estimates his capabilities in the coming year with fair precision, as do also his neighbours. But his own conception of good form seems to weigh with him more than such purely economic considerations. He does not want to appear presumptuous, or to make claims beyond his status. It is bad for a young man to demand as much ground as an old, even if he occupies an outside hut, or for a single woman to fix wide boundaries to her patch. Fear of the accusation of pride (*icilumba*) or that reputation for personal ambition, which is so often associated with charges of witchcraft in this society, are important factors in fixing the limits of village beds, and the whole division seems to be arranged without much formal allocation. A man estimates his neighbour's intentions and gauges public opinion as to his own status, and acts accordingly. He does not even put boundaries (*mpaka*) between his beds and those of another for fear of accusations of sorcery, and if there is a doubtful issue it can be taken for granted that personal relations and questions of relative status are always put before agricultural considerations. I have seen at least two cases where a man considered that his privilege had been infringed upon, but decided

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CHAPTER XIV

SOIL SELECTION

ONE of the chief agricultural problems of the shifting cultivator is obviously the selection of the land on which he is to plant each year. The European or Chinese peasant, who is born and reared on one patch of soil, knows every yard of the ground from which he has to wrest his living. Each fertile strip, each stony outcrop or water-logged meadow, is a known quantity—an advantage to be exploited or a difficulty to be circumvented. But the African moving from patch to patch across the bush requires quite a different type of knowledge. He has usually more than enough land on which to grow his crops, but he has to choose, in the empty acres surrounding him, the best strip to clear, and if he chooses wrong, his garden may fail or give a poor yield. Our first problem is therefore to discover whether some traditional body of knowledge guides the Bemba in their choice, and if so, what measure of success or failure their method of land selection gives.

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Alternatively there may be a number of social and economic reasons which govern the people's choice of a village site or of garden lands, and these may seem to them more important than the production of the maximum food.

Choice of Village Sites.

For instance, the Bemba choose a suitable site for their villages before they mark out their garden plots. They pick ground for villages as near as possible to a good supply of trees to cut for their millet gardens, but a convenient water-supply is also of great importance to them, and there are a number of sociological factors which weigh with them. Some headmen, for instance, must continue to build more or less in the same spot even after its soil is nearly exhausted and all the high trees in the neighbourhood cut down. They do so for political and religious motives. Most chiefs are bound by tradition to keep their villages in a certain area, whatever its economic defects. Any visitor to the capital of the Paramount Chief will hear complaints as to the scarcity of trees for cutting, and will notice that the inhabitants have to make their gardens as much as a day's walk away from the village. Even

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the chief and his followers have to move into temporary grass shelters (*imitanda*) during the tree-cutting and harvest seasons, and commoners will camp near their gardens for as many as four months of the year. The *bakabilo*, or hereditary councillors of the Paramount Chief, are also prevented for politico-religious reasons from moving far afield. Of Citimukulu's 160 villages, 52 were under the rule of hereditary councillors or priests in 1934, and of this latter group I should judge that at least 30 were bound for traditional reasons to remain fixed to one locality. For commoners the choice is much freer, although they have a strong tendency to build within a five-mile radius of their relatives. But I have known them make a village on poor soil because they wanted to live on the motor road, or near to a white man's farm. The people also cultivate exhausted soil in areas near a white settlement like Kasama, where the villages move from site to site, sometimes at a distance of a quarter of a mile or so, in order to be near the town. The fishing villages on the banks of the Chambesi are similarly fixed without special reference to the soil possibilities since in this case the value of the fishing is greater than that of the agricultural produce. At Molema, near some valuable fishing pools in the Chambesi, the ground has been under continuous cultivation, chiefly with cassava, for four generations.[1] Apart from these special cases, it can be said that the majority of headmen build villages in the best soil they can find within an area of five or ten square miles of their last site.

Choice of Garden Sites.

Having founded his village, the next step for the Bemba is to choose his garden plots. In this case he is looking first and foremost for suitable ground for millet cultivation. He has no other object in mind. To select the most suitable spot for his garden he is guided first by certain general factors such as the presence or absence of plenty of high trees and grasses. He divides the *mpanga* into two main categories—the ordinary woodland (*umutengo*) in which gardens are made, and the tall grass-bush country (*icipya*, plur. *ifipya*) which passes locally into thickets (*amateshi*). The *ifipya* are not cultivated though they may be fertile. They are the haunts of buffalo and elephant and are commonly avoided by native paths. The hunter goes there but it is difficult to find a way

[1] Cf. Chap. XVI, p. 341.

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Successes and Failures in Soil Selection.

In spite of their rudimentary classification of different types of forest and soil, the Bemba method of land selection seems to provide a fairly wide margin of possible failure, and regular testing of soil by trial and error is part of their traditional routine. Their ritual of founding a village seems to indicate that they themselves consider the choice of a new site an important and even a dangerous decision. Without supernatural aid the headman believes he cannot hope to keep his followers together, but he is also afraid he may have to move his village for economic reasons, i.e. because he has made the wrong selection of site. I have seen communities move their huts for ritual reasons—the death of an important person or the apparent hostility of the spirits; because of some unforeseen disaster such as elephant raids or damage by pigs or monkeys; and because of a wrong choice of soil.[1] There is actually some element of risk in the selection of a site, and it is not surprising that the Bemba follow the village founding ceremony—usually the planting of the first stake (*ukushimpa*) in the headman's new hut—by a hunting ritual (*ukusoa libanda*) to discover from the sex of the first animal killed whether the spirits (*imipashi*) are going to bless the gardens during the year. In many districts, too, a series of subsequent divination tests are carried out with the object of confirming the confidence of the people in their new choice of site. At Kacienja, near Shiwa Dandu, a ritual hunt took place after the building of the first spirit hut of the new village to see if the *imipashi* were satisfied with the choice of the site, and intended to bless the people with food there. The building of a second hut to other *imipashi* was followed by another ritual hunt. Although these rites are not carried out all over the country nowadays, they may be considered as an indication of the native's evident anxiety as to the successful building up of his new community, and his apprehension as to the possibilities of the site he has chosen.

As regards the selection of their gardens the Bemba are also not infallible, in spite of a certain empirical knowledge of the properties of the soil. I noticed that the failure of crops planted in the village mounds was not uncommon, in the first-year beds especially, and secondly, that the natives seemed to expect to proceed along

[1] e.g. April 1933 Canda we Elya moved on account of raids by wild pigs, and two villages in Nkolemfumu's district (July 1933) because of elephants. Cf. also the case of Munuka village described on p. 284.

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CHAPTER XVI

FISHING AND HUNTING

FISHING and hunting will be discussed only cursorily in these pages. It is, however, necessary just to touch on these activities in order to be able to complete the economic calendar of work. 226

Fishing Methods.

The Bemba cannot be described as a fishing tribe. As a food, fish makes one of their favourite relishes, and is reckoned nearly as great a treat as meat. They catch fish whenever they can, and very much appreciate dried fish, but such food is regarded rather as a sudden piece of luck than as a regular article of diet, and fishing itself in a greater part of the country is an amusing pursuit, particularly when undertaken communally, rather than a serious means of getting one's livelihood. Among the neighbouring [184] Bisa, a fishing tribe living on Lake Bangweolu, each fish is known by name and referred to as such, and every child in the community is able to pick out the different sorts correctly from a heap. But [825] among the Bemba, though different types are recognized by the older men, the rest of the natives just speak of 'fish'. The Bisa regularly dry fish and trade it over the country. They have a fixed [437] system of prices and reckon each catch carefully in terms of financial profit. The Bemba, on the other hand, only sell fish occasionally, at certain seasons of the year, and then by a process of casual barter. Apart from those who live by the banks of big rivers [502] they are indifferent boatmen and handle clumsily the paddles of the dug-out canoes at river fords. Along the Chambesi, Luansenshi, 226 and other big rivers there are, however, definite fishing villages 463 recognized by the natives as such. These villages remain fixed in [34] one position year in year out. Here we find fishing by one method or another going on all the year round, a complex system of ownership of weirs and rights of use of ponds, and special fishing ceremonies such as are not found over the rest of the plateau. The 226 inhabitants of these villages are definitely specialist fishermen, dis- 463 tinguished by name as *umulonga* (plur. *abalonga*) and considered very 329 exclusive and even dour by the rest of the Bemba. The latter discuss the habits of these fishermen as though they were almost a

[p. 329]

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When a man dies his name, his kinship duties and his hereditary bow are passed on to his sister's son or to her grandson through a daughter. The heir actually becomes the dead man in a social sense: he adopts the kinship terms the latter used, calling, for instance, 'maternal nephew' the person he would previously have called 'brother'. The same positional succession takes place in the matrilineal line for women, and a dead woman will be replaced by her sister or a maternal granddaughter. In this system women are honoured as the bearers of many children and such a woman is said to found a house.

In the case of the royal crocodile clan the maintenance of descent is even more important. All senior chieftainships in Lubemba, the country of the Bemba, are held by members of the royal lineage.

A successor to such a chieftainship has access to 'great spirits', those of his dead predecessors, and he not only prays to them at the sacred shrines in his capital, but he acquires supernatural powers in his own person, so that he can bless and curse. His good health and vitality bring blessings to the community, and his ill-health or death, the reverse.

Princesses have the special duty to bear fine children in order to provide the country with chiefs, and they are honoured for doing so. The spirits of royal women are mentioned in prayer in tender and grateful terms as 'those who carried us in skins on their backs and gave us suck'. The first ancestress, Bwalya Cabala, is buried in a grove which is one of the most sacred places in Lubemba.[1]

Bemba clans are not segmentary. The effective kinship group within the clan is a three or four generation group, the men and women who trace their descent to a common great-grandmother and who remember a village of origin (*cifalo*). These are not corporate matrilineages in any territorial sense. The kinship system makes for a great deal of movement from village to village during a man's or a woman's life. The villages themselves change in composition and move from place to place following the shifting cultivation.

There appear to be no fixed leaders of the matrilineage, except in the case of the royal dynasty, but this group is the unit of succession to the offices and the names of dead men and women and to their ancestral spirits.

[1] Cf. *Land, Labour and Diet in Northern Rhodesia*, p. 337.

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The Ceremony

881 778 532 district although there is individual variation in their modelling, while others seem to be of local distribution. I made a collection of about forty-three myself, but think there are likely to be twice that number either made or still remembered in the Bemba country. Each of the pottery emblems has its name and its song.[1]

Larger models of unfired clay decorated with beans, soot, chalk and red dye, are also made in the chisungu hut during the ceremony, and destroyed the same evening. They include, for instance, an enormous snake the coils of which cover the whole floor, a figure of a man and a woman, and lion made of logs covered with clay and with a head of hair. These are also described as *mbusa*.

881 778 531 The second type of *mbusa* are the wall designs. These are rough designs painted on the inside of the initiation hut at a certain stage in the ceremony. Most of them are conventional patterns with names and secret interpretations. Nine of these designs were used in the ceremony I saw, but Brelsford has recorded twenty others.

881 778 The third type of emblem consists of small bundles of objects representing the domestic life of the Bemba, that is to say, essential food of the tribe, such as millet, sorghum, meat, dried fish and salt, as well as fire wood, snuff and the red camwood dye known as *ubula*. Certain groups of trees used in the ceremony are also known as *mbusa*.

THE CEREMONY

881 361 The chisungu ceremony that I attended started at Cisonde village near Chinsali on June 1st, 1931. Chinsali is a Government station. It consisted at the time of two European officials' houses,

[1] H. Cory has collected many hundreds of these figurines from Tanganyika tribes. His book, shortly to be published, gives an account of their distribution, together with a number of illustrations. See also his 'Figurines used in the initiation ceremonies of the Ngulu of Tanganyika', *Africa*, vol. XIV, No. 8, 1944. The Venda, Lovedu, and Vandau of Portuguese East Africa also use figurines. Schofield considers the Bemba figures similar to the pottery images found at Zimbabwe, cf. 'Pottery images or mbusa used at the chisungu of the Bemba people of North-Eastern Rhodesia', *South African Journal of Science*, vol. XLI, Feb. 1945.

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Government messengers' quarters, and some stores. The big Church of Scotland mission of Lubwa, with its teachers' training school, lay a few miles away. It was therefore a matter of some surprise to me to hear that the ceremony was to be carried out in a village so much in contact with European civilization. The reason was, I think, that the mistress of the ceremonies (*nacimbusa*), Nangoshye, was a sister of the head Government messenger and living under his protection. She was a woman of some position in the neighbourhood and reckoned herself as of royal rank although she was only a member of a junior branch of the royal clan. She had an unusual personality, great organizing power, and a sharp tongue that sent her fellows scampering to carry out her commands. She was extremely anxious to keep alive the days of her past glory and to teach and interest the girls of the neighbourhood. I estimated her age as between 50 and 60, and she had an unusually good memory. She was well known to me as she had travelled with me through the neighbourhood for a period of at least four months, and had been one of my chief informants. She was anxious that I should see a ceremony correctly carried out, and the fact that one of her paternal nieces was due to be initiated gave her a suitable opportunity to arrange this. It was also a time of great food shortage, and she realized that it would have been difficult to get sufficient beer for the ceremony unless I had been able to procure the necessary millet for her.

I think the chisungu ceremony would have been performed for this particular girl, and a companion from a neighbouring village, if I had not been there, but it would probably have taken place at a later date and on a smaller scale and possibly the scene would have been shifted to a more remote village. It is certainly true that my presence attracted more women from the surrounding village than would otherwise have attended and that an effort was made to carry out the rites as nearly according to tradition as possible. The younger women spoke of the ceremony as an unusually important one for the neighbourhood, chiefly, I think, owing to their admiration and respect for Nangoshye. The rites were, therefore, more elaborate than were usual in that area in 1931 but much less long and complex than would have been the case in pre-European days. The whole ceremony was complete in just

The former make millet gardens on such land as is clear of water and subsequently plant mounded cassava. Such a two-year sequence may be continued for several years, but many groups abandon cultivation after the first two years. Village gardens are also planted with cassava, and bananas and pineapples are grown. In such gardens, made on low sandbanks denuded of soil by years of cultivation, cassava seldom grows to full maturity owing to the hunger of the cultivators. Some people make an annual migration to the Lunga plain to plant millet, others barter fish for meal. Very little in the way of subsidiary crops is found beyond a little kaffir corn, some beans and sweet potatoes. In the territory of Chief Kasoma[1] the people make a mass migration to cultivable areas in the dry season, June to November.

The Twa cultivate little, relying mainly on their fishing with which they get meal by trading. A certain amount of cassava cultivation is found here and there.

HUNTING AND FISHING

While every Bemba is a hunter by inclination, present shortage of game prevents this desire from being fully gratified. While Melland[2] records the existence of organized hunters' guilds and specialized hunters among the Kaonde these do not at present exist among the Bemba, although elephant hunters formerly were specialists. Hunting by traps and pits is neither an organized nor a specialized activity. Net hunting demands communal effort and is often carried out as a form of divination. There is little information on the hunting activities of the other groups; among the swamp peoples (Unga, Twa, Bisa) hunting is subordinated to fishing but the meat of a certain antelope (*lechwe*) was greatly in demand and these animals were hunted so persistently that a protection law has only prevented, recently, their extinction. There was a certain amount of trade in *lechwe* skins worked in designs.

Fishing is not a major activity, though fish is greatly appreciated as a relish and caught whenever possible. There is no regular trade in fish, nor is fishing a whole-time occupation except for certain groups living on the banks of the larger rivers, where there are definite fishing villages with permanent sites where fishing is carried on all the year round, and there is quite a complex system of pond and weir ownership.

Fish are caught by three chief methods: by poisoning, by weirs and by nets. Poisoning is a communal and unskilled activity carried out at the end of the dry season (August-November). Weirs are only in use in November and December before the crocodiles become a menace. Only one type of net is used, a rectangular variety, stretched across the river, at the beginning and end of the dry season.

It is among the swamp peoples, however - the Unga, Twa and, to a lesser extent, the Bisa - that fishing attains greatest importance. Here the land resources are so depleted, by the over-cultivation of areas which are diminishing in size through increasing inundation, that the growing population

(1) Brelsford, S. 1946. (2) Melland, 1923.

167 by which a young son-in-law is gradually incorporated into his wife's group
593 is therefore altered. The young wife remains behind with her own people and not with her in-laws and thus, perhaps, is in a happier position than she would be in a patrilineal society; but Read considers that the brides are better looked after among the patrilineal Ngoni, where a woman's in-laws have made a considerable marriage payment for her and conceive it to be their duty to look after her while her husband is away.(1)

AGE SETS AND ASSOCIATIONS

561 Age is not stressed as a principle of social grouping. Precedence is reckoned on the basis of seniority and, as among other peoples, there are
[881] special terms for the various stages of life, but there are no boys' initiation ceremonies and no regiments based on age such as are found among the Nilo-Hamitic groups in East Africa. The existence of certain occupational
575 groups, as fishing communities, and of associations, such as those of iron-workers among the Aushi and Chishinga, has already been noted. While there are no secret societies among the Bemba, the Twa in the swamps of Bangweulu were renowned for *Butwa*, a secret society whose influence at one time extended the length of the Luapula river on both banks as far as Lake Mweru. Among the tribes affected by the cult were the Aushi, Unga, Shila, Tabwa in the group at present under consideration, and also the Lamba and Lunda.(2) It is suggested that in its original form *Butwa* is now extinct,(3) but it is uncertain whether it still exists in a modified form. Membership was not restricted by age or sex and people were initiated into the mysteries at a festival which lasted several days. The avowed aims of the society were to suppress selfishness and promote social life and its main attractions seem to have been dancing, singing, beer drinks and sexual licence; there was also considerable prestige attached to the ability to converse in the secret language *Lubendo*.

LOCAL AND TERRITORIAL GROUPING

● 361 The basic residential group is the village - a collection of 30 to 50 huts in the case of a commoner and several times this number in the case of a chief. All these peoples live in villages rather than isolated homesteads, but the size of the villages and their propinquity vary widely from area to area; Bemba villages, for instance, are often 16 to 20 miles apart.

621 The village normally develops as a kinship unit. It can come into
624 existence when a middle-aged or elderly man feels he has a sufficient following of relatives to justify his application to the chief for permission to set up a community of his own. While it is generally built close to relatives, the abundance of land makes it possible to build anywhere within the chief's administrative district. The nucleus is the headman's own matrilocal extended family composed of his young married daughters and their children, together with members of his matrilineage such as his widowed sisters and their sons and daughters. The number of relatives attached to a headman varies with his popularity and efficiency. A man may also succeed to the headmanship of a village by taking the name of his maternal grandfather or maternal uncle by the *kupyanika* system already referred to (see p.15). A

(1) Quoted by Richards, 1940.
(2) Anon. N.A.D.A., 1948. (3) Brelsford, S, 1946, p.14.

5:Slaski E-4 (no date) 1950 FQ5 Bemba FQ5

Luapula Peoples

The fifty or so clans represented in the valley are part of a fairly uniform clan system which extends over the territories inhabited by the Bemba-, Luba- and Lamba-speaking peoples. The *Bena Mumba* (Clay clan) have their *ntulo* at Matanda in the upper valley of the Luapula, those of the *Bakosa* (Millipede clan) and the *Bena Mbushi* (Goat clan) are on the Lualaba; that of the *Bena Mfula* (Rain clan) is in the forest of Ngumbo on Lake Bangweulu. Originally, it is vaguely believed, all came from Kola (Angola?) 614

The *cikota* or *cisaka* is a segment of the clan, no longer localised, whose members gather to discuss *milandu* cases and to make decisions in matters of inheritance and succession. 613

Cikolwe ("big cock") is a term used to denote a common ancestor. It can be applied to the head, alive or dead, of a matrilineal descent group of any size, but usually refers to the ancestor or ancestress who broke away from the clan and led his extended family and followers from their clan *ntulo* to the valley.

Clan membership is not rigidly determined; it is usual to belong to one's mother's clan but it is possible to claim membership of any of the clans to which one's grandparents belonged. The descendants of the Lunda of Muata Yamvo remain patrilineal. The Luba from the Lualaba, who joined the Lunda and became Lundaised, were previously matrilineal. 611 614

TERRITORIAL ORGANIZATION AND SETTLEMENT

Villages were originally founded by the immigrant groups under the leadership of *fikolwe* (sing. *cikolwe*) many of whom were women. The nucleus of each group was formed by a single matrilineal descent group, *cikota*. In spite of inter-marriage and increasing spatial mobility, which tend to obliterate the original connection between the territorial and the kinship structure, villages are still identified by outsiders with their founding clans. 621

Village headmanship remains in the *cikota*. The headman succeeds to the office, the name, the wives, and the insignia (belt and gun or spear) of his predecessor. He has the charge of *nshipa*, the village medicine. A village is divided into wards, *fitente* (sing. *citente*), in which the households of close relatives are grouped together. [624]

Most of the old village sites in the *dambos* of the Luapula tributaries are now derelict. With the coming of the Pax Britannica and the development of cash sales of fish the villages moved closer to the river edge and now extend along the trunk road. New villages recognised by the government must number at least fifteen tax-payers. The average size of villages is 150-200 inhabitants. The capital has a population of 3,000.(1) 361 621

Formerly the huts were circular, grass-roofed, woven bamboo structures,(2) scattered amidst cassava plantations.(3) Nowadays the villages are more 342 361

1) The capital is usually referred to as Kazembe. It was moved south after the Yeke invasion. The old site is part of the territory settled by the Bemba after they had assisted Kazembe against the Yeke. The new site was previously known as Mwansabombwe.

2) Valdez, II, p.249; Burton, p.46. (3) Livingstone, I, p.248.

342 361 compact, and sun-dried brick is increasingly being used in building. Appendages usually include a raised granary-storehouse, a platform for drying cassava, a kitchen, goat-and-sheep pen and latrine. Fishing camps are of more flimsy construction consisting of wattle-and-daub or grass shelters.

361 621 On the left bank of the Luapula, where the density of the population and its mobility are less, greater concentrations of kinsfolk occur in the villages, which are more isolated and irregularly distributed.

542 945 In polygynous households there is a house for each wife. An open space is left in front of the headman's hut which otherwise does not differ from the others. There are bachelor huts (*itanda*, pl. *amatanda*) for boys but few for girls.

361 722 During the Yeke raids the population was concentrated in some dozen stockaded villages.

361 Village-gardens are occasionally enclosed as a precaution against the bush-pig, especially near Lake Mweru. Each village has its own landing-stage (*cabu*).

621 People are now free to build where they wish and the tendency for houses of kinsfolk to be grouped together is disappearing. As the Watch Tower movement developed separate villages were set up by believers who cultivated and harvested in the fields communally.(1)

INITIATION RITES

881 Initiation rites were more elaborate for girls than for boys. Girls still undergo *cisungu*, a *rite de passage*, common to the Bemba-speaking peoples but not found among the Luba, which aims at preparing them for their future life and duties as housewives and mothers. The instruction is imparted by the *Banacimbusa*, matrons and midwives.

[304] There are now no initiation ceremonies for boys. Lunda boys were formerly circumcised at 14-16 years of age(2) in a *mushitu* (thicket) in the Nshinda swamp. No parallel operation was performed on girls.

561 The society is not formally differentiated on the basis of age, and there are no indications of the existence of an age-set organisation.

SECRET SOCIETIES

575 Of the secret societies the *Butwa*(3) was open to both sexes. *Bulindu* is described as a women's society.(4) The *Butwa*, believed to have originated among the Twa of Lake Bangweulu and to have been established in the country prior to the arrival of the Bemba-speaking peoples,(5) had lodges "along the entire length of the Luapula as far as Lake Mweru on both the British and the Belgian sides"(6) in 1914. "Nkuba is the recognised

(1) Quick, 1940, p.221.
(2) Burton, p.128.
(3) Campbell, I. 1914.
(4) Crawford, 2, p.129.
(5) According to Campbell. Another version is that it came "with the migratory tribes of the Kazembe's, the Walunda and the Wausi, from the west about 1760." (Gouldsbury and Sheane, 1911, p.260.)
(6) Campbell, op.cit., p.77.

631 The kingdom of Kazembe extended from the Lualaba to the Bemba country and from the Aushi paramount chiefdom of Mweremere to the Tabwa chiefdom of Nsama. The districts at a distance from the capital were governed and
636 defended by resident *bakalanga* (watchmen) appointed by and answerable to the Kazembe. Outlying dependencies, *amayanga* (sing. *yanga*), were con-
701 trolled by Kazembe's agents who travelled with their *mabumba* (retinues) to collect the tribute. There was no standing army.(1) In time of general war the governor of the frontier district, Moenempanda,(2) commanded the troops raised by provincial chiefs.

●361 The earlier capital, on the eastern side of Lake Mofwe, had to be
643 moved to a new site at the death of a Kazembe.(3) It was surrounded by a deep ditch(4) and enclosed with a wall of reeds. Its gateway was decor-
644 ated with dozens of human skulls.(5) On returning to his country after the Yeke raids had been beaten off, Kazembe moved the capital farther south to Mwansabombwe where it has remained. The Kazembe had a large corps of palace officials, many of whom were his *bacanuma* (fellow-clansmen of his mother), and a bodyguard.(6) Fumo Anceva,(7) the Kazembe's chamberlain, superintended the management of the palace, escorted foreigners and arranged audiences. There were five classes or ranks of Lunda: Kazembe and his family; the descendants of the Lunda chiefs from Muata Yamvo's country; those of the Luba chiefs from the Lualaba invested by Muata Yamvo; those of the clan heads who came with the first Lunda expedition; and those descended from the indigenous Shila chiefs and headmen admitted to Lunda-hood. Only sons of a Kazembe by a Lunda woman of the second or third rank were eligible for the position of Kazembe.(8) A reigning Kazembe usually recognised his successor officially.(9) The badge of office, the *lukano* armband, had to be transferred from the arm of the dead Kazembe to that of his successor.(10) A *mutaba*-tree leaf was inserted in his mouth during the enthronement ceremony.

643 Kazembe and his household lived in the *nosumba*, the royal enclosure.(11)
644 His first four wives were given traditional names: Moari, Intemena, Kasaleuca, Fuama.(12) The families (? lineages) of women who had borne a Kazembe formed a nobility. Their members were the *bacalulua*.

624 Village headmen are nowadays administrative and ritual officials. They transmit the decisions of the Native Authority; they act as mediators in disputes, and endeavour to settle them amicably without the parties going to court; they organise work-parties to clear channels and repair village fences; they tend the village medicine (*nshipa*), ritually purify lion-killers, and take ritual measures to end a drought. Formerly they officiated at the sowing and first-fruits ceremonies. They are appointed by the
622 Kazembe from among the members of their predecessor's *cikota*. District chiefs hear cases in the first instance. An appeal from their decisions can be made to Kazembe, who is head of the Native Authority. The chiefs have succeeded the tax-collectors who were established under the British

(1) Valdez, II, p.238.
(2) Gamitto, I, p.246; II, p.18; Burton, p.110.
(3) Livingstone, I, pp.247, 264; Burton, p.139.
(4) Burton, p.43.
(5) Livingstone, I, p.247.
(6) Valdez, II, p.238.
(7) Burton, pp.101, 108.
(8) Gamitto, II, p.17.
(9) Valdez, II, p.232.
(10) Gamitto, II, pp.35-6.
(11) Valdez, II, p.214.
(12) ibid., p.254.

7:Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1940 FQ5 Bemba FQ5

A chief's village (*umusumba*) is very much larger than that of a commoner. Inhabitants of the capital are composed of relatives of the chief, his followers, and also a number of families which moved there originally to win royal favour and have become accustomed to court life.[1] Since a chief's reputation depends largely on the size of his capital, and his councillors, courtiers, and administrative officers were drawn largely from his villagers, the *umusumba* is an important unit in the political machine. The late Nkula's village had about 400 huts when I visited it in 1931, that of the Citimukulu 150 in 1938. The capitals of pre-European days were evidently very much larger. These communities were divided into sections (*ifitente*, sing. *icitente*) and though nowadays there are nine *ifitente* at the paramount's village, there were formerly thirty to forty, according to native accounts.

The whole Bemba territory is divided into districts (*ifyalo*, sing. *icalo*). The *icalo* is a geographical unit with a fixed boundary and a name dating from historical times, e.g. the district of the Citimukulu is known as Lubemba, the country of the Bemba, and that of Mwamba, Ituna. These districts are territories originally allotted to members of the royal family, but once so divided they have never been sub-divided to provide smaller chieftainships for a new generation of princes as has happened in some parts of South Africa.

But the *icalo* is also a political unit. It is the district ruled over by a chief with a fixed title—the name of the first ruler to be appointed over each particular strip of land, always a close relative of one of the earlier Citimukulus. There are several types of chief, the paramount, who has his own *icalo*, as well as being overlord of the whole Bemba territory; the territorial chiefs, five or more in number, who have under them sub-chiefs who may rule over very small tracts of country or, rather, over a few villages.[2]

Each of these chiefs is known by the same title *mfumu* and each *icalo* is a more or less self-contained unit, a replica of the social structure of the other. Each capital has its own court, however small. Each chief has rights over the labour of his own villages. They work for him only and not for the paramount as happens among

[1] The phrase '*umwino musumba*' ('inhabitant of the capital') is used to indicate a 'chief's man' or a person of specially polished manners and knowledge of affairs.

[2] Mwamba has as a sub-chief, the Munkonge, and the Nkula has Shimwalule, Mwaba, Mukuikile, Nkweto, &c.